



**For immediate release
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75TH ANNIVERSARY OF CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS CELEBRATED AT THE STATE HOUSE

State officials, legislators, and alumni of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) gathered at the State House this morning to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the CCC, a Depression-era New Deal initiative that employed young men who worked to improve forests and other public recreational resources across the country between 1933 and 1942.

This celebration kicks off the Department of Conservation and Recreation's (DCR) year-long series of events, exhibits, and educational programs in Massachusetts state parks to celebrate the legacy of the CCC.

In Massachusetts, the 100,000 men who enrolled in the CCC program planted trees and worked on forest fire prevention, insect pest eradication, and many other initiatives, and are credited with building the state parks recreational infrastructure. Today's celebration recognized and applauded their accomplishments and also celebrated the continuing legacy of stewardship embodied in programs such as the Student Conservation Corps (SCA), recognized by the CCC as its modern-day successor.

"This is an extraordinary gathering of men who changed the face of this Commonwealth and, indeed, of the nation," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Ian Bowles. "We owe them and the entire CCC a huge thank you for the work they did creating parks and improving open space and leaving a legacy of public service and civilian stewardship for generations to come."

Several Massachusetts CCC alumni attended today's ceremony, including Frank Evans of Marlboro, Frank Thomas Jr. of Lexington, Francis Derwin of Quincy, J.W. Eugene of Plymouth, Andrew Cammorata of Plymouth, and Mrs. Gene Sheeran of Kingston, widow of alumnus Henry Sheeran. Also attending were two alumni from Connecticut, Walter Sekula and Sam Harrison.

"About my CCC experience, I get goose pimples thinking about it today," said Derwin. "It's not complicated, just the life experience growing up in the Great Depression and being part of a program that put energy into useful action. That kind of emotion has to be imparted to the youth of America today; let's face it, the youth of America is its success. By recognizing the

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Richard K. Sullivan, Jr., Commissioner
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CCC spirit of that time, DCR and the Student Conservation Association, Boy Scouts, and Girl Scouts keep the stewardship legacy alive.”

Today’s celebration was the first in a series of events, exhibits, and education program that the Department of Conservation and Recreation will sponsor throughout 2008 to honor the legacy and accomplishments of the CCC.

On May 17, the Friends of Myles Standish will sponsor a CCC Alumni Recognition Program as part of a community barbecue at Fearing Pond in Plymouth in the last remaining CCC-built log bathhouse in the state. The program will include several nature and history programs.

On May 31, Wendell State Forest will sponsor a day-long program exploring life in the CCC, including a camp, an exhibit of CCC tools, and other exhibits. CCC alumni will share stories about life in the Corps.

On Oct. 11, the Friends of Upton State Forest also will sponsor a CCC Day Celebration.

“This is a great way to commemorate the 75th anniversary and the great work performed by men in the 1930s, which, in many areas, is a living history of hard work and commitment to improving our public parks,” said State Senator Michael Morrissey of Quincy.

State Senator Edward M. Augustus Jr. of Worcester said, “The founding of the Civilian Conservation Corps was a defining moment in one of the most influential generations this country has produced. The work done during the Depression, just like the workers themselves, remains a proud legacy.”

The CCC was established by then-President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933 as one of his first New Deal initiatives to help employ men during the Great Depression. In Massachusetts, the men worked in about 68 camps across the Commonwealth, creating roads, trails, ponds, forest plantations, and recreational facilities. They planted more than 12 million trees; laid out picnic areas and campgrounds; built fireplaces, picnic shelters, log cabins, and bathhouses; and created dams and ponds.

“Massachusetts owes an enormous debt of gratitude to the men of the Civilian Conservation Corps who laid the foundation for the extraordinary state park system we have today,” said DCR Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr. “When the CCC was established, most of the state forests were inaccessible and had been cut down for timber. Today, tens of thousands of visitors to our parks each year enjoy passive and active recreational opportunities that were barely imaginable before the CCC began its work.”

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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, and dams, in addition to 278 bridges and miles of roadways. Led by Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr., the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.